



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, July 18, 2011

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**Public Affairs**

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## **District Man Pleads Guilty to Charges in Dispute With Neighbor Over a Parking Space - Defendant Made Threats, Drove His Car Directly at the Victim -**

WASHINGTON - James J. Newton, Jr., 51, of Washington, D.C., has pled guilty to charges stemming from a dispute in which he threatened his neighbor over a parking space, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced today.

Newton pled guilty on July 14, 2011 to two counts of felony threats and one count of failure to appear for court. He is to be sentenced September 16, 2011 by the Honorable Anthony C. Epstein in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Newton faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for each count of felony threats and up to six months in jail and a fine of up to \$1,000 for failing to appear for one of his court appearances in the case.

According to the government's evidence, on February 4, 2010, at about 1:45 p.m. Newton illegally parked his car in the victim's driveway, after the residents had warned him not to park there. The victim, Newton's neighbor, called the police to the scene in the 1200 block of 17<sup>th</sup> Street NE, and the officers ticketed the car. Officers also concluded that the temporary license tags on Newton's vehicle had been forged and were expired. The police confiscated the tags.

When Newton returned to his car, he became enraged once he noticed his tags were missing. He barged into the house and began threatening his neighbor, who was home alone.

Among other things, Newton insinuated that he would burn down his neighbor's house. Terrified, the victim grabbed a machete and demanded that Newton leave his home. Newton ultimately returned to his car. The victim also left the house, following behind to tell the 911 operator the direction that Newton was heading. Newton then backed his car into a fence, causing property damage, and drove directly at the victim and tried to hit him with his car.

Newton narrowly missed striking the victim with his car. He was arrested a short time later and made a number of threats to the officers about returning to the house to kill his neighbor.

He also told the officers to check his record because he was serious about killing. The police determined that Newton had a prior conviction for manslaughter in Maryland.

In announcing the plea, U.S. Attorney Machen commended those who worked on the case from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), including Detective Randal Parker of the Fifth District Criminal Investigation Division, who led the investigation. He also acknowledged the work of Officers Gary Walker, Claude Jackson, Helen Andrews, Anthony Simms, David Evans and Larry Hale. Finally, U.S. Attorney Machen expressed his appreciation to Paralegal Kalisha Johnson-Clark, who prepared the case for indictment, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Terry Eaton, who conducted the pre-indictment investigation and is prosecuting the case.

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